Public Law 97-297
97th Congress

An Act

To amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a criminal penalty for threats against former Presidents, major Presidential candidates, and certain other persons protected by the Secret Service, and for other purposes.

Oct. 12, 1982
[H.R. 6168]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) chapter 41 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

Threats against former Presidents and certain other persons, criminal penalty.
18 USC 879.

"§ 879. Threats against former Presidents and certain other persons protected by the Secret Service

"(a) Whoever knowingly and willfully threatens to kill, kidnap, or inflict bodily harm upon—

"(1) a former President or a member of the immediate family of a former President;

"(2) a member of the immediate family of the President, the President-elect, the Vice President, or the Vice President-elect; or

"(3) a major candidate for the office of President or Vice President, or the spouse of such candidate;

who is protected by the Secret Service as provided by law, shall be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

"(b) As used in this section—

Definitions.

"(1) the term 'immediate family' means—

"(A) with respect to subsection (a)(1) of this section, the wife of a former President during his lifetime, the widow of a former President until her death or remarriage, and minor children of a former President until they reach sixteen years of age; and

"(B) with respect to subsection (a)(2) of this section, a person to whom the President, President-elect, Vice President, or Vice President-elect—

"(i) is related by blood, marriage, or adoption; or

"(ii) stands in loco parentis;

"(2) the term 'major candidate for the office of President or Vice President' means a candidate referred to in the first section of the joint resolution entitled 'Joint resolution to authorize the United States Secret Service to furnish protection to major Presidential or Vice Presidential candidates', approved June 6, 1968 (18 U.S.C. 3056 note); and

"(3) the terms 'President-elect' and 'Vice President-elect' have the meanings given those terms in section 871(b) of this title.". 18 USC 871.

(b) The table of sections for chapter 41 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"879. Threats against former Presidents and certain other persons protected by the Secret Service.".

SEC. 2. Section 871(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after "to take the life of" the following: ", to kidnap,".

SEC. 3. The sentence beginning "Subject to the direction" in section 3056(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking out "and 871 of this title" and inserting in lieu thereof "871, and 879 of this title"; and

(2) by striking out ", joint-stock land banks and Federal land bank associations are concerned, of sections 218, 221" and inserting in lieu thereof "and Federal land bank associations are concerned, of sections 213, 216".

SEC. 4. (a) Section 1013 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking out ", or by any joint-stock land bank or banks".

(b) Section 1014 of such title is amended by striking out "a joint-stock land bank,".

(c) Section 1907 of such title is amended by striking out ", Federal land bank, or joint-stock land bank" and inserting in lieu thereof "or Federal land bank".

Approved October 12, 1982.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 6168:

HOUSE REPORT No. 97-725 (Comm. on the Judiciary).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 128 (1982):
Aug. 16, considered and passed House.
Sept. 28, considered and passed Senate.